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*Library of the* *Archbishop* *(1)*  
A  
SHORT ACCOUNT  
OF  
THE ORIGIN OF THE ORDER  
OF THE  
SERVITES OF MARY,  
AND OF  
THE SCAPULAR  
OF THE  
SEVEN DOLOURS.



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Nihil obstat,

Joan. Can. Morris,

Rev. Syn.

*Imprimatur,*

Die 13 Januarii, 1865.

NICHOLAS CARDINAL WISEMAN.

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE Order of the Servites of Mary claims our veneration by an antiquity of 630 years. This Order has for its principal object, the imitation of Christ and His Blessed Mother, in order to work out our own sanctification and that of others, by a virtuous endurance of this life's afflictions. Most dear is this duty to those who consider how the sacrifice of Calvary gave to the Church in the Queen of Martyrs the sweetest and most affecting image of sanctified suffering and of the spirit of immolation, for Mary participated by her heart's anguish in all the torments of Jesus. The generosity indeed, wherewith both Jesus and Mary, though each in a different manner, sacrificed themselves for our salvation, teaches us that, if we cannot escape mental anguish and bodily pain, we may, nevertheless bear them courageously and profitably; nay, even desire them as blessings from Heaven.

It is this spirit of sacrifice sanctifying suffering, that enables the Church to number besides her glorious legions of martyrs by blood, the separate and distinct band of martyrs of the heart. Jesus Christ, in virtue of his unspeakably bitter Passion is verily their King, but although each of these holy bands derives the example and the merit of its own peculiar martyrdom from the interior and exterior Passion of Jesus Christ, yet in external effects the former more

especially resemble Jesus, while the latter, in that they shed not their blood, resemble rather Mary, whose blood indeed was not spilled, but who endured in a greater degree than any other creature, grief and martyrdom of the heart. Thus as the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ is strikingly perpetuated in the martyrdom by blood, so are perpetuated in the heart's martyrs the Dolours of the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

It was therefore the will of God, that since there existed already in His Church religious bodies whose institution reminded the faithful, that they have in Him a Father, and in Jesus a Brother, to console and succour them in their miseries ; there should likewise be another which should remind the unhappy that in Mary they have a most compassionate Mother, in the meditation of whose woes they will find balm for their own sufferings, and strength to bear them with merit. To this end, He vouchsafed to raise up an Order which should personify the memory of the Queen of Martyrs, and perpetuate in its members the sorrows of the Mother of Dolours.

This mission was entrusted by Divine Providence to the Seven Blessed Founders of the Servites of Mary, an Order which, ever humble and retiring, (like a youthful widow in the seclusion of the inner chamber of her grief, where God alone is witness of the sublime acts of her most heroic virtues,) counts among its children a long list of Saints, heroes of patience, abjec-

tion and charity, who, absorbed in the remembrance of the desolation of their Heavenly Queen and Mother, held nothing glorious save the cross, and became martyrs of the heart.

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## ORIGIN OF THE SERVITE ORDER, AND OF THE SCAPULAR AND ROSARY OF THE SEVEN DOLOURS.

THE 13th Century, considered with reason the most brilliant age of the Catholic faith, was nevertheless a period in which great sufferings, and still greater errors agitated the Church, convulsed Europe, and Italy more especially; but in proportion to the magnitude of the evil was the efficacy of the assistance afforded to the Church of Christ by Her Heavenly Spouse.

The sons of the heroic Gusman, the disciples of the Seraph of Assisi, the children of the great St. Augustine, and the religious of Mount Carmel were rapidly formed into a valourous army, which ranged in battle array throughout Europe, renewed the miracles and the virtues of the first christian ages, and once more bore witness to the truth of the Divine promise, that the gates of Hell should never prevail against the Church.

To these four Institutes was added at an early

date, that is in the year 1233, the Order of the Servites of Mary, established for the special end of propagating a tender devotion towards the Mother of the redeemed, and destined to produce a most immediate fruit, by its strenuous exertions against the division between the Guelphs and Ghibellines, then desolating Tuscany, the country which had given it birth, according to Scipio Ammirato in his account of the rivalry between the patrician families of the Amedei and the Buondelmonti. The name of Servites or *Servants* of Mary bestowed on this new Order was not suggested by human wisdom but proceeded first from the innocent lips of tender infants at the breast, amongst whom was St. Philip Benizi, then five months old. These little babes, beholding the Founders of the Order for the first time, suddenly and to the unfeigned wonder of their mothers and of all the city of Florence, broke out into articulate speech, exclaiming : "*Behold the Servants of Mary.*" The Founders were seven Florentine patricians, who according to the custom of that epoch, were also engaged in commerce ; their names were : Bonfiglio Monaldi, Giovanni Manetti, Benedetto dell' Antella, Bartolomeo Amidei, Ricovero Lippi-Uguccioni, Gherardino Sostegni, and Alessio Falconieri. They were members of a pious confraternity called the *Loudesi*, which possessed a small chapel on the very site where a little later the famous Giotto constructed from his own designs, the magnificent belfrey of the metropolitan



church of Florence, admired at the present day as one of the masterpieces of art which adorn the capital of Tuscany. The abovenamed sodality had been instituted to celebrate the praises of Mary the chosen daughter of Sion, and to appease by her intercession the divine wrath, which exasperated by the intestine divisions and fierce passions of the Florentines, was visibly pursuing the guilty republic with signal chastisements, and menaces of still greater severity. This pious Society soon increased both in numbers and reputation, in consequence of the shining virtues practised by the seven young patricians who had unconsciously become the example and the admiration, not only of the nobility of Florence, but of the entire city. They were, however, as modest as they were pious, and sedulously avoiding whatever might disturb their profound humility, they devoted themselves solely to the promotion of God's glory, the peace of the commonwealth, and their own sanctification. Animated by these sentiments, they were pouring forth their hearts before the altar of their heavenly Queen, on the Feast of her Assumption into heaven, in the year 1233, when each one of the number felt himself overpowered by a certain celestial sweetness and ineffable emotion, and being rapt in ecstasy, beheld a wonderful light divided into seven resplendent rays, one of which was directed towards himself, and at the same time he heard a voice calling him to a new and perfect way of life. He then saw the Blessed

Virgin herself surrounded by a bright light, who invited him to follow her, and sweetly smiling disappeared.

The interior wonder and fervour of spirit which took possession of the privileged youths after this consoling vision, can be more easily imagined than described. Suffice it to say that the other members of the confraternity having departed, these seven remained absorbed in prayer, and with their eyes full of tears of gratitude and love, gazing wistfully at one another, as if not knowing what to do or say in the overflowing plenitude of their devout affections. Silence was at length broken by Monaldi, the eldest of the seven, and the chosen friend of all the others. He declared the vision and supernatural call with which he had been favoured to his six companions, and learned with astonishment that the vision, the call, and the inward desire to comply with the invitation of their divine Mother was common to all. It was at once determined by them to carry the pious inspiration into effect on the approaching festival of our Lady's Nativity, and in the meantime to renounce their worldly possessions, to disengage themselves from family ties, to relinquish the public offices which some of them held, and to implore the advice of the Bishop, and his blessing on their undertaking. All this they punctually executed amidst the tears of their relations and friends, and to the amazement of the whole city. Encouraged by the exhortations and blessing of the zealous

Bishop Ardingo Trotti, and clothed in humble garments, they retired to a small house called *Camarzia*, situated on the spot now occupied by the magnificent church of Santa Croce, celebrated for the marvellous works of art which it contains. It was at this period, that after having fixed upon their mode of life, and the special devotions to be practised by them in honour of their heavenly Mother and Advocate, as they were proceeding together for the first time to the Bishop's palace to obtain his approbation of what they had decided, they found themselves unexpectedly greeted by the title of *Servants of Mary* by little infants in their mothers' arms, and the salutation was immediately taken up, and repeated with loud acclamations by the multitudes gathered together on their path.

This extraordinary and supernatural occurrence, increasing the veneration felt toward them by all classes of their fellow citizens, proved an occasion of great trial to their shrinking modesty, for they were besieged and importuned on all sides by numbers who sought their counsel and direction in spiritual matters. They had recourse therefore to the Blessed Virgin, in order to learn from her how they were to escape from their present vexations, and from the more serious difficulties which they apprehended. In answer to their prayer, the Queen of Heaven vouchsafed to shew them in a vision, the mountain of Senario, making them understand that this was the spot in which it was her will that they should take up

their residence. Full of joy at this new favour, the seven penitents hastened to the Bishop, who loved them like his own children. They related what had happened, and he not only consoled them with the kindest words, but gave them a material proof of his good will by generously bestowing upon them the Forest of Senario which belonged to him. Upon this they immediately collected their poor furniture, and accompanied by their confessor and carrying the crucifix and the image of Mary, (their design being unknown to all but the Bishop and their confessor) they set out on the 31st of May, 1234, which was that year the Vigil of the Ascension, and proceeded to Senario, distant about three leagues from Florence. Having reached the summit of this steep mountain, they fell on their knees, and prostrating themselves before the image of Our Lady, exclaimed: "*Behold O Heavenly Lady, we have left all things and have followed thee, our Mother.*" Then they took shelter in some caverns which they discovered near the top of the mountain, and the next day raised an altar adorning it in the best way they were able, for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, and having constructed a small oratory and some huts with the branches and leaves of trees interlaced together, the Seven Blessed Fathers began to lead a life more angelical than human, exercising themselves in every kind of virtue and penance, passing their days and nights in prayer and in singing the praises of their celestial Queen, and

procuring the bare necessities of life by alms, which they begged from door to door in the streets of Florence. A life of such eminent virtue, and of such austere penance as to renew in Senario the rigours of Thebais, could not long escape from public admiration, in fact the whole of Tuscany soon resounded with the fame of the seven holy penitents. The Cardinal Castiglioni, afterwards Pope Celestine IV., was induced by the fame of their sanctity to visit them at Senario, when finding that the reality far surpassed all that he had heard, he felt himself obliged to exhort them, in unison with their Bishop, to moderate the extreme rigour of their life ; he likewise recommended them to receive some of the many candidates who desired to consecrate themselves to the service of God and our Blessed Lady under their guidance. The Blessed Fathers promised the required mitigation of their austerities, but observed at the same time that as it had never entered into their minds to found a new Order, and as they simply wished to expiate their own sins, and work out their own salvation they felt it impossible to admit others into their mean and humble company. To this the Bishop rejoined that they ought not to take the decision of so important a point upon themselves ; that many aspirants were ardently desiring to join them ; that the good to be expected from their reception was very great ; consequently, it was necessary to implore the light of Heaven, and to consult the will of the Blessed Virgin in

an affair of so much moment. It was therefore settled that they should offer up special prayers for this purpose, and the Cardinal and Bishop, much edified and affected by what they had seen, shortly after left Senario.

The prayers of the Blessed Fathers meanwhile rose up to Heaven, and were favourably heard. A vine which they had planted near the summit of the mountain, suddenly brightened into leaf, and blushed with rosy grapes, while a considerable tract of the surrounding soil was covered with verdure and blooming flowers, though the season was severe, and it was near the close of the month of February. The Bishop being informed of this event, applied himself immediately to prayer in order to discover its hidden meaning, and he beheld in a vision a vine divided into seven branches, each of which separated into seven others, and all grew up, increased, and flourished in beauty and fertility. Then the mother of God appeared to him and pointing to the vine, declared it to be her chosen plant, destined to bring forth during many ages, plentiful fruits of virtue and of honour. Upon this, the Bishop hastened to Senario, made known with an exulting heart the future blessings symbolized by the wonderful vine, and related his vision touching the increase and propagation of the new Order. He found the Servants of Mary resigned to the divine will, and it was unanimously agreed that the reception of a few postulants should be preceded by a triduo, to be celebrated during

the three days before the approaching Feast of Easter, for the purpose of obtaining light to discern more clearly the good pleasure of the Almighty. This intention was carried into execution, and on the evening of the ensuing Good Friday, our Blessed Lady appeared to them robed from head to foot in a long black mantle, and surrounded by a numerous troop of Angels bearing the instruments of the passion, the emblem of the Servite Order, the Rule of St. Augustine, and many habits of the same colour as the Virgin's mantle. Taking these garments in her hands, she distributed them to the Seven Fathers, ordaining that they and all who were to follow in their footsteps should wear them, not only in memory of her bitter sorrows and anguish, but also in token that this pious remembrance was, through their means, to become perpetuated on earth. Having said these and similar things the heavenly Foundress of the Servites disappeared, and the first Fathers of the Order, recovering from their stupor, dried their tears and being again warmly encouraged by the Bishop, put on the habit indicated to them by the Queen of Martyrs, and at the same time admitted many others to the same great privilege.

In consequence of these events and of the evident manifestation of God's holy will, it became necessary that the Founders should turn their attention towards the means of obtaining a recognition of their Order from the Holy See. A partial success rewarded the efforts made with

this view by Monaldi, who had been elected head of the new Institute. He obtained at Fermo, on the 13th of March, 1249, from Cardinal Raniero Capocci, Legate of the Pope in Italy, the protection of the Holy See in favour of the Order, the ratification of his own powers as its superior, and license to admit to the holy habit as many as should desire it.

Although Monaldi had obtained a great deal from Cardinal Capocci, there remained much more to be conceded before the Order could be considered as in possession of the full and absolute approval of the Holy See, a thing most difficult to obtain at that time, when it was customary for the Holy See to proceed with the utmost caution, on account of its being well known that there were many who concealed the most perverse intentions under the mantle of piety. Nevertheless, as the Blessed Seven were now intimately convinced of the will of the Blessed Virgin concerning the perpetual duration of the new Institute, they endeavoured, as was indeed their duty, to procure this final approbation by unremitting efforts and incessant prayer, and they were the more earnest in the business, because in compliance with the wishes of many of the Bishops, several houses of the order were already opened in Tuscany, and they were continually receiving petitions for new foundations. They, therefore, steadfastly pursued their holy purpose, receiving still further encouragement from St. Peter Martyr, who visited the fervent



penitents of Senario by command of Innocent IV., and became their apologist, as well because he was convinced by his own experience of their virtue, as because he had learned in a vision that they were the objects of the special protection of the Blessed Virgin. Finally it was settled that Monaldi, accompanied, by some of the others, should present himself before the Sovereign Pontiff, who had recently returned to Italy after the death of the impious Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, which took place in Apulia, December 13th, 1250.

Father Bonfiglio accordingly proceeded to Perugia where the Pope at that time resided, and having on his way converted a manichean who had insulted him, he threw himself at the feet of the Vicar of Christ, who received him with the greatest affection, and as an unequivocal mark of his favour, appointed his nephew Cardinal Guglielmo Fieschi, protector of the Order. At the same time the Pope gave hopes that within a brief delay, when the new Institute should have become a little more matured and consolidated, he would grant it his full and unconditional approbation. However, the vicissitudes of the times, and the difficulties arising from the rule of the fourth Council of Lateran, which fixed the number of the Regular Orders, prevented Innocent IV. from fulfilling his promises. The wishes of the holy Fathers were, however, in great measure granted by his successor, Alexander IV., who, by a Letter Apostolic, dated from

Naples, May 26th, 1255, conceded to Monaldi favours and privileges for the Order, equivalent to a complete approbation.

The existence of the Order being now secured from every danger, the seven Blessed Founders and their first disciples applied themselves seriously to the work of propagating a tender devotion to the Dolours of their heavenly Mistress, this being the fulfilment of the mission imposed upon them at Senario, and the means whereby they were to render all the faithful partakers with them in the holiness of life accompanying the practice of this devotion, and in the eternal glory and heavenly palms, promised by the Blessed Virgin in the above named vision, to all such as, under the name of her *Servants*, should have made it their study to sympathize with her in her bitter sorrows.

Not content, therefore, with venerating their divine Mother by every kind of homage; greeting her with the *Ave* at the commencement of mass and with the *Salve Regina* at its close; fasting every Friday of the year *in memoriam suscepti habitus, ac humanae redemptionis reverentiam* (in memory of the reception of the habit, and of man's redemption); honouring her by reciting the crown of the five psalms, the initial letters of which compose her name; nor with giving the habit complete, as they received it on the sacred mountain, to the numerous candidates who applied for it; they also instituted a little habit or Scapular to be worn by those of the

faithful who, unable to observe the rigours of conventual discipline, desired nevertheless to participate, as much as possible in a secular life, in the honour and glory of the blessed service of Mary.

Close upon the institution of the Scapular came that of the Rosary commonly called of the Seven Dolours of Our Lady, a devotion by which we may condole daily with the most afflicted Mother in her principal sorrows, that is, in the seven epochs of her life, when her maternal heart was most cruelly lacerated by the sword of grief. This Rosary is composed of seven mysteries, in each of which a meditation is made on one of the Seven Dolours of Our Lady, and one *Pater* and seven *Aves* are recited in its honour. These seven mysteries are terminated by three *Aves* in honour of the tears shed by Our Lady during her Dolours. To this has now been added the hymn *Stabat Mater*, and a *Pater*, *Ave* and *Gloria* in honour of the seven Blessed Founders of the Order. The first rosary of this kind belonged to St. Philip Benizi, and is still to be seen at Todi, where it is carefully kept with the body of this great servant and apostle of the Dolours of Mary, esteemed with reason as almost another founder of the Order of Servites, on account of the extraordinary zeal with which he propagated, with the spread of his Order, the devotion to Our Lady of Dolours throughout the whole of Europe, and even in infidel countries.

This then is the illustrious origin of the Scapular and Rosary distributed by the Servite Fathers to those who desire to belong to the Third Order, or in other words to the confraternity of Our Blessed Lady of the Seven Dolours, and to be aggregated, as fellow servants of Mary, to the Order, *ab ipsa Deipara Virgine in memoriam suorum Dolorum habitu lugubri assignato, instituto*, as is mentioned by the Sacred Congregation of Rites in the Decree concerning the proper office of the Seven Dolours given May 16th, 1673, and confirmed by Pope Clement X. on the 17th of the same month, and approved by Benedict XIII. in the proper lessons of the Seven Blessed Founders, and before them by Innocent VIII. in the golden Bull called the "*Mare magnum Ordinis Servorum.*"

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE WONDERFUL  
PROPAGATION OF THE CONFRATERNITY  
OF OUR LADY OF THE SERVITES  
OR OF THE SEVEN DOLOURS.

HAVING given a sketch of the origin of the Servite Order, of the miracles which accompanied it, and of the command which the seven

Founders received from Our Lady to propagate the new Order, which had taken root and developed itself under her especial protection, we think it will not be useless to say a few words respecting its extension and the causes which contributed to it, in order to shew forth the obedience of the seven patriarchs to the commands of their celestial Lady and Foundress of their Order, and also the wonderful manner in which the devotion to the Dolours of Mary spread over the whole world, and thus gave rise to the pious societies now called Confraternities of the Servites, or of the Seven Dolours

All that has been briefly stated respecting the origin of the Servite Order is calculated to arouse the wonder, and the interest of all impartial and christian minds. Seven noble youths who abandon the delights of the paternal roof and bid farewell to the sweetness of domestic life, who renounce brilliant careers and prospects in order to embrace a poor and penitent life; their fellow-citizens of every rank who fly to them for counsel, and who, moved by their example and advice, change their manner of life; babes at the breast who on seeing them dance with joy in their mothers' arms, and bursting forth into articulate speech, hail them as *Servants of Mary*; the people who crowd upon their footsteps as upon those of distinguished heroes; St. Peter Martyr and Cardinal Castiglione who, commissioned to examine their spirit, become their admirers and proclaim their virtues to the

people, and to the Sovereign Pontiff himself; the appearance of Our Lady to the above-named saint and martyr, in which she shewed them to him sometimes under their human form, at others as spotless lilies adorning her bosom, and jealously guarded by her beneath her mantle; the disappearance of factions and their fomenters at the mere sight of these apostles of peace and concord; the conversion of many of their chiefs; the miracles so frequently taking place on Mount Senario; the miraculous vine seen by all to flourish and blossom in the depth of winter, and on the summit of a mountain where the snow lasts nearly all the year, and the cold is most intense; the astonishment of the citizens of Florence on beholding men formerly distinguished for their riches now begging alms, having given all to the poor of Christ in order to live like Him; these and similar facts too long to narrate, naturally aroused the wonder and the interest of those who sincerely professed the Catholic faith, and incited them to desire and to favour by every means in their power, the spread of the new institute, and particularly of the devotion to the Dolours of Mary professed by it. In a short time all Tuscany resounded with their names and the fame of their virtues and miracles. Besides the convents of Florence and of Senario, those of Sienna, Arezzo, Pistoja, Borgosansepulcro, and Citta di Castello were founded in the first years of the Order, and they gave birth to many other societies and confra-

ternities which adopted the little Scapular, and professed and propagated the devotion to the Dolours of Mary.

About this time a circumstance occurred which contributed powerfully to spread the devotion, and thus to attain the end of the new Institute, and to it, we believe, is owing the propagation of the Order in Germany. The soldiers, who had fought under the banners of the impious Frederic and his partisans in Germany and Italy, had fallen under the ecclesiastical censures fulminated by Innocent IV. Cardinal Pietro Capocci, Legate of the same Pontiff, wishing to favour the rising Order, gave ample faculties to the General and to the Religious to absolve from the excommunication, all those who should enrol themselves in the Servite Order. This indult was granted at Ancona, in February, 1250. How much it tended to the extension of the Order and of the devotion to Our Lady of Dolours, is sufficiently proved by the numbers of every rank and condition who, in Italy, Germany, and Belgium, gave up the profession of arms, and bidding farewell to factions and party spirit, peopled in a short time the convents of the Order, and the pious confraternities which took their origin from it; and who, fighting under the banner of the Queen of Martyrs, acquired a reputation for christian heroism and virtue.

A new and miraculous occurrence which took place in 1252, added still more to the celebrity

of the new Order. Whilst they were engaged in adding to the monastery of Florence on the spot called Santa Maria di Cafaggio, the B. Bonfiglio Monaldi and B. Alessio Falconieri conceived the idea of replacing the faded painting of Cafaggio by a new picture alluding to the title of the new Order, and the humility of its children. They determined, therefore, to have Our Lady depicted in the act declaring herself the *Handmaid of the Lord*, and having consulted the rest, and prayed fervently, they proceeded to effect their design. They entrusted the work to a painter named Bartolomeo, celebrated as much for his piety as for his artistic skill, they then renewed their prayers for the success of the undertaking, which prayers they redoubled when they heard that the painter, having painted the figure of the Blessed Virgin, found himself powerless and as if ignorant of his art when he attempted to pourtray her face. They were still praying together when the painter, having returned to his work, fell asleep with his pencil in his hand, and awaking shortly after, found the face designed and completed by angelic hand. Struck with astonishment, and knowing that it was impossible that any human being could have executed so difficult a work in so short a time, and in so perfect a manner, he exclaimed aloud : "a miracle, a miracle." The Blessed Fathers hearing what had occurred hastened to the spot, and prostrated themselves before the heavenly portrait. The Florentine population flocked in



crowds to see it, and moved by divine inspiration saluted it as : “ *Holy Mary Mother of Grace.*” This salutation has never been belied. More than six centuries ago have now gone by, and the Servite Order, and the city of Florence have ever found in *Our Lady of the Annunciation* (the true name of the painting,) an inexhaustible fountain of graces and benefits of every description, the narration of which would fill volumes. This event shewing again how dear to Our Lady was the rising Order, increased the love and devotion of the people to it, and in Tuscany this love has ever been mingled with feelings of reverence for their country’s glory. Another event confirmed this love. It is a custom in the Order to go every day in procession to Our Lady’s altar, singing the *Salve Regina*. The religious at Florence leave the choir and go to the altar of the Annunciation. While they were engaged one day in this pious act before a crowd of people, on coming to the words *ejā ergo advocata nostra*, Our Lady, who is represented in a sitting posture with her hands joined, was seen to rise and stretch forth her arms towards them, as if to shew that she would receive and protect in her maternal arms, all those who by humble and fervent prayer, had recourse to her. To a people of lively faith, such as the Florentines were at the time I speak of, this solemn and public fact was more eloquent in favour of the new Order than any human words or arguments.

Next to the protection of Our Lady shewn in so many and in such wonderful ways, that which contributed most powerfully to the propagation of the Order and of the devotion to the Dolours, was the zeal of the seven Founders and almost contemporaneously that of St. Philip Benizi. This Saint, who at the age of five months hailed the Servants of Mary, and exhorted his mother to give them an alms, was called to the Order which he had endeavoured to assist when but a babe in arms, first by a miraculous crucifix, and afterwards by Our Lady herself whilst he was praying and hearing mass before the altar of the Annunciation during the octave of Pentecost. He broke at once the ties which bound him to the world, and rejected the honours it lay at his feet on account of his illustrious birth, his learning, and the many other noble gifts of mind and body which adorned him, to become a Servant of Mary, and indeed the last of all, having obtained by his tears the favour of receiving the habit as a lay brother. However, his virtues, the fountain which he caused to spring miraculously from the hard rock and which is still to be seen, and the profound learning which transpired in his conversation, and which all the artifices of his ingenious humility failed to conceal, caused him, against his own will, to be raised to the dignity of the priesthood, and his first mass celebrated on Mount Senario and accompanied by the music of the angels, was the consecration of an apostle of the faith and of the

Dolours of Mary, as well as of a *Thaumaturgus* which he was soon shewn to be. Raised soon after to the dignity of General of the Order, he gave a new impulse to the Apostolate already begun by the seven Blessed Founders, and while the B. Alessio Falconieri laboured at the santification of Tuscany; Monaldi at that of Umbria, the Marches and Latium; Manetti at that of Lombardy and France; Uguccione and Sostegno at that of Germany and Spain; Philip, passing over these countries, and aiming still higher in his eagle flight, penetrated not only into oriental Phrygia, Tartary, and Asia, but almost as if possessing the gift of ubiquity, was present at, and took a lively part in all the principle events of his time, such as the Council of Lyons, the peace between the Emperor Rodolph of Austria and the King of Bohemia, the pacification of the Romagnas and of Tuscany, besides many other brilliant transactions, any one of which would suffice to render the life of a man illustrious. It would be an arduous undertaking, and one far beyond the limits of this little work, to endeavour to relate the wonderful increase of the Order in consequence of the apostolic zeal of its Founders and of its Propagator; we shall say all in a few words when we affirm that in the time of St. Philip the new Order counted ten thousand religious, without including the Mantellate founded by St. Juliana Falconieri under the direction of St. Philip, and the numerous Confraternities of the Seven Dolours

which sprung up as if by magic wherever St. Philip turned his steps, and which multiplied under the shadow of the monasteries founded by him, and became fruitful in piety and good works by the zeal of his disciples, and the fervour of the faithful who joined them.

Nor must it be supposed that the greater number of those enrolled in the Confraternity of the Scapular of the Dolours belonged to the lower classes, for in France the holy King Louis IX., Philip III., Philip IV., his son and nephew, Philip VI., with the greater part of the nobility and the Princesses of his Court, belonged to it; in Germany, the Emperor Rodolph I., the Founder of Austrian greatness, with his Empress and many Princes of the Empire and of the Church; in Italy, a great part of the nobility of Tuscany, of Romagna, and of Umbria, dedicated themselves to the service of Mary in the third order. Pacified by the exhortations of the Blessed Founders and of St. Philip, the rebellious chiefs of the sanguinary factions of the Lambertazzi and of the Geremei in Bologna; of the Adimari and the Tosinghi in Florence; of the Guelphs and Ghibellines in the whole of Italy, consecrated themselves to God even amid the rigours of the first and second orders. Amongst the rest were Bonaventura Bonaccorsi, Pellegrino Laziosi, Ubaldo Adimari, and many others, illustrious by the nobility of their birth, and who died with the reputation of sanctity. The very houses of the first Fathers became soon so many

monasteries consecrated to Mary, as the wives and daughters of some of the Blessed Founders followed their example. So did the parents and sister of St. Philip, and a short time afterwards many others of the Benizi family, and of the Falconieri, even the mother of St. Juliana with wonderful humility becoming the disciple of her daughter, and they were joined by many of the most distinguished matrons and young girls of Tuscany.

Although owing to the tyranny of the Moors in Spain the Order and devotion had as yet made but little progress there, nevertheless in the following century, Father M. Luca da Prato was sent there with the faculties of Apostolic Missionary by Gregory XI. in 1375, and he not only founded many monasteries both of men and women, but he exercised his ministry with so much zeal that Ferdinand King of Portugal, many of the chief nobles of his court, and the greater part of the people; Henry, King of Castille, Peter IV. of Arragon, and John of Navarre became members of the Confraternity of the Seven Dolours founded everywhere by this zealous preacher. About the same time, the Emperor Charles IV. and his Consort Anne, and Ladislaus IV., King of Poland, received the Scapular from Stephen of Borgosansepulcro, General of the Order and Nuncio of Martin V., by whom, at the petition of the King, he was elected Cardinal, though death prevented his being invested with the sacred purple by the

Pontiff. It would be tedious to enumerate one half of the Princes and Princesses who in the first, second, and third orders wore the sorrowful habit of Our Lady of Dolours. It will suffice to mention that not only the most serene Princes of Mirandola, of Parma, of Mantua, of Tuscany, of Savoy, of Bavaria, of Saxony, of Burgundy, but nearly all the Emperors and Archdukes of Austria were members and protectors of the Confraternity, and when the Order was destroyed by the fury of the heretics in Germany, they were its most powerful restorers; knowing how many graces their illustrious ancestors had received from Our Lady of Dolours, Rodolph I. having become a tertiary of the Order acknowledged that he owed to her his Empire, victory and peace, when by means of St. Philip Benizi, he saw Ottocaro, King of Bohemia, humbled at his feet. The Fathers Gasparo Tausch and Engelgrave of the Society of Jesus, relate that scarcely had Philip I., Archduke of Austria and King of Spain, instituted the Confraternity of the Seven Dolours in Flanders, then he saw at once the wonderful effects produced by it. The civil war which had so long desolated the country entirely ceased, and its towns once so wicked, became so many Ninevehs: *Et ecce illico tumultus publici seditionesque compositae, et mores urbium in melius commutati.* Not to speak of Maximilian, Ferdinand, Mathias and many others, the great and pious Leopold in a letter of thanks written

to Clement IX., December 24th, 1668, proclaims his devotion to the holy habit of Mary for, having been invested with it in his childhood, he had by it been saved in a mortal illness : *nos enim peculiariter sancto huic Ordini obligatos profiteamur, cum in infantia nostra virtutem dicti Scapularis miraculose, et luculentur experti sumus.*

The Emperor Charles VI. who inherited the virtue and piety of his father obtained in the year 1734 from the Apostolic See for the regular and secular clergy of the Austrian Empire, the privilege of reciting the office of Our Lady of Dolours according to the Servite Rite, on the 3rd Sunday of September, besides the Office recited by the whole church on the Friday in Passion Week ; this was also obtained in 1735 by the King of Spain for the whole of his possessions, and many other Sovereigns sought and obtained the same favour long before this Office was extended to the whole Church by Pius VII.

Many of the Sovereign Pontiffs in the first centuries of the foundation of the Order, distinguished themselves by their devotion to our Lady of Dolours. Chief amongst these must be enumerated Alexander, Urban, Clement and Nicholas, the fourth of each name, who having been enrolled in the Confraternity of the Dolours, ennobled it by many diplomas, and enriched it with a spiritual treasure of indulgences. Other Pontiffs imitated their predecessors, particularly Benedict XIII., Clement XII., and Benedict XIV.; the two first speak with particular devo

tion of the Dolours of Mary in two Bulls published in favour of those devout to them, and the third wrote of them in a style as learned as devout in the book of the Feasts of Our Lord, and of the Blessed Virgin.

The same tender devotion was practised by Clement XIII., Pius VI., Pius VII., and Gregory XVI., from the first years of their pontificate. Nor is the great Pontiff, who now reigns, second to any of his predecessors in this pious and touching devotion. It is enough to remember that besides public and private proofs of his tender piety towards the Mother of the redeemed, and the singular favours granted by him to the Order of Servites, he has succeeded in effecting the long desired definition of Mary's Immaculate Conception, and must therefore be enumerated amongst her most devout clients, and the warmest promoters of her honour.

After so many glorious examples, no one will be astonished to find that the devotion to the Queen of Martyrs is at the present day spread, not only over the whole of Europe, but also in America and the East and West Indies, nor can there be found a Catholic kingdom, city, or place in which the Confraternity does not exist. This will not seem wonderful to those who reflect that this devotion has been exalted by the Fathers of the Church, instituted by Mary in the world, after being recommended by the crucified Redeemer himself to all the faithful in the person of the beloved disciple. Anna Juliana, Arch-



duchess of Austria, who re-established the Order in Germany, considered this devotion so salutary to her soul, that she retired as a tertiary with her daughter, into one of the three monasteries she had herself built in Inspruck, and when there, would often say to Our Lady with tender devotion as she kissed her Scapular: "*O Holy Lady, how have I merited so great a favour as that of wearing the habit of thy Dolours? How have I made myself worthy to find this great and hidden treasure? What gold, what blood could ever equal so exalted a privilege? In consecrating myself to thee, I have given thee nothing. I am neither worthy nor capable of giving thee thanks. Do thou then sweet Lady, give to thyself the thanks I owe thee, and cannot render thee.*" So great was the esteem in which this pious Princess held the holy habit of Our Lady of Dolours, that in order to receive it she refused the nuptial alliance of the Emperors Rodolph II. and Matthias, and her daughter that of Philip III. of Spain. Would to God that those who imitate her in wearing the Scapular of Our Lady of Dolours, would also follow her example in her spirit of true devotion to the Queen of Martyrs; for, to quote the warning so often addressed by the B. Alessio to his Religious: "*Let our brethren bear in mind that we are not to be content in meditating upon, and compassionating Our Lady's Dolours. This is far from being all that the most Holy Mother of God asks from us. She desires that in moving our hearts to compassionate her sufferings, we should*

*at the same time excite in them a determination to put an end to the cause of her sorrows, which is sin."*

We may then with greater confidence and security, look for that especial protection with which Our Lady promised St. John the Apostle, the seven Blessed Founders, particularly the B. Alessio Falconieri, and afterwards St. Bridget to watch over those devout to her Dolours, under all circumstances, but more especially at their last hour.

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## RULES\*

*recommended to the Members of the Confraternity  
of Our Lady of Dolours.*

I. To go to confession and communion on the day they are enrolled, in order to gain the Plenary Indulgence.

II. To recite daily the *Pater* and *Ave* seven times, in honour of the Seven Dolours.

III. To recite at least once a week the rosary of the Seven Dolours.

IV. To fast, or to practise any other mortification on the vigils of our Lady's Feasts, and on all Fridays of the year,

V. To visit the altar of our Lady of Dolours and to go to confession and communion on the two principal Feasts of the Dolours; the 3rd Sunday of September, and the Friday in Passion

*\* These rules are not obligatory. Whoever omits them only loses the indulgences attached to them.*

Week, and on the 3rd Sunday of every month.

VI. To pray for the welfare of the Servite Order, of the merits and good works of which they are partakers.

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### ADVANTAGES

*of those enrolled in the Confraternity of the Dolours  
as revealed to St. Mechtilde and St. Bridget.*

I. Contrition at the hour of death.

II. Assistance in all their afflictions and particularly at their last hour.

III. Jesus Christ will imprint upon their hearts a lively compassion for His sufferings, and

the Dolours of Mary, in order to give them the reward in Paradise.

IV. Jesus grants to His Mother, who suffered so much on His account, whatever grace may be profitable to those devout to her Dolours.

*also*

Those enrolled in the Confraternity participate during their life and after their death, in all the good works and prayers of the Order of Servites.

On the principal feasts of Our Lady of Dolours, mass is sung for the members of the Confraternity.

The deceased members will participate every year, on the 3rd of November, in the suffrages of the Office for the Dead, and all the masses celebrated on that day in all the churches and chapels of the Order, also in the daily recital of the rosary whether made in public or in private by the Religious of the Order.

N.B. It must be observed that in order to participate in the spiritual advantages of the Order of Servites of Our Lady of Dolours, and particularly in order to receive the blessing of the Scapular and of the Plenary Indulgence at

the hour of death, or when in danger of death, it is not enough to have a scapular or rosary simply blessed and to wear them, but it is also necessary that the person should be inscribed as a member of the Confraternity of the Dolours by the Fathers of the Order.



